

**Proposal of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development
Commission for 2005 Coastal Management Fellowship**

Develop a Comprehensive Plan for the San Francisco Bay Water Trail

Introduction. Residents of the San Francisco Bay Area have been served by two regional trail advocacy organizations that endeavor to complete the San Francisco Bay Trail and the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

The San Francisco Bay Trail Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to planning, promoting and advocating implementation of the Bay Trail is administered by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and is governed by a 28-member volunteer board of directors representing a broad range of interests. The Bay Trail is a planned recreational corridor that, when complete, will encircle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays with a continuous 400-mile network of bicycling and hiking trails. It will connect the shoreline of all nine Bay Area counties, link 47 cities, and cross the major toll bridges in the region. To date, approximately 240 miles of the alignment—over half the Bay Trail's ultimate length—have been completed. The Bay Trail receives considerable funding for trail planning and construction from the California State Coastal Conservancy.

The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council is a non-profit organization that plans, promotes, and constructs the Bay Area Ridge Trail, a 500-mile multiple-use trail connecting parks and preserved open spaces along the ridgelines surrounding California's San Francisco Bay. The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council accomplishes its mission through a small group of dedicated employees guided by a Board of Directors. Although most of the ridge trail is remote from the Bay, some segments cross the Bay along ridge lines at the Golden Gate and Carquinez Strait, and the trail provides spectacular views of San Francisco Bay. The Ridge Trail is funded by a mix of private contributions and government funds.

Recently, a third organization has been established with the goal of increasing access to the waters of San Francisco Bay. Bay Access, Inc. is a grassroots, volunteer non-profit organization pursuing its vision of a San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail, which would provide a connected series of staging, launching/landing, and camping sites to facilitate human-powered on-water recreation. Members of the group represent kayakers, canoeists, dragon boaters, whale boaters and others interested in non-motorized on-water recreation. They hope to institutionalize support among the agencies charged with providing access to the Bay to generate plan policies, funding, partnerships and political support for implementing the Bay Water Trail. Bay Access also wants to maintain an independent user/advocate organization that can work in partnership with agencies, the private sector and members of the public as need arises to achieve various goals of the Bay Water Trail.

The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), the nation's first state coastal management agency, has jurisdiction over the San Francisco Bay segment of the California coastal zone. The Commission administers the award-winning *San Francisco Bay Plan*, which provides enforceable policies that guide efforts to achieve, among other things, maximum public access to the Bay. Therefore, BCDC has a particular interest in the Bay Water



Trail because it is charged with planning for and providing opportunities for water-oriented recreation in San Francisco Bay. As the popularity of kayaking, windsurfing and other non-motorized recreation has grown, BCDC has responded with policy changes that address the provision of facilities for small craft launching and landing. The Bay Water Trail project provides a unique opportunity to advance the Commission's recreation goals as the public increasingly looks to the Bay, the region's largest open space, for recreational opportunities. Working with Bay Access, BCDC intends to refine its Bay Plan policies to advance the goal of achieving the Bay Water Trail. This provides an exciting and meaningful opportunity for a NOAA Fellow who would in concert with BCDC staff, as well as partner organizations over a two year period develop a comprehensive plan, with maps and graphics to promote implementation of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail. The Commission would provide office space, mentorship and technical support to the NOAA Fellow.

Project. The Commission is seeking a Coastal Management Fellow to work collaboratively with key federal, state, and local recreation management agencies and organizations including the National Park Service, the California Coastal Conservancy, the California Department of Boating and Waterways, the Bay Trail Project, regional park managers, and with recreational boating organizations, such as Bay Access, Inc., the Pacific Inter-Club Yacht Association, and marina operators to develop a policy plan and implementation program for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail. The results of the Fellow's work will directly contribute to the update of the Commission's *San Francisco Bay Plan* recreation policies pertaining to small craft use on San Francisco Bay.

Project Description

1. Develop a detailed work program in consultation with BCDC staff, other agency staff and stakeholders to define the scope of the project, the necessary participants, the nature and extent of information gathering required, the public process needed to build widespread support for the initiative and the critical stakeholders who should be involved.
2. Gather and analyze the information required to identify the existing and potential landing and launching sites for inclusion in the trail; clarify and resolve potential use conflicts, such as with commercial shipping, wildlife, recreational boaters and others; identify opportunities for and address concerns regarding camping and hostels throughout the Bay; and research other relevant issues.
3. Conduct a stakeholder planning process including local, state and federal agencies, advocates, and environmental organizations to gather input and define roles in plan development and implementation.
4. Prepare a preliminary report on issues and opportunities for plan development and a detailed outline for a draft plan.
5. Develop a draft plan, relying on a stakeholder process, earlier research and guidance from mentor and other agency staff.
6. Peer-review plan with agency partners, Bay Access, stakeholders and experts.
7. Present plan for consideration by the Commission, Bay Access non-profit and partner agencies.

Goals and Objectives

1. Coordinate with key recreation, environmental protection and management agencies and recreational boating organizations to develop a Bay-wide policy plan and a program for the implementation of the San Francisco Bay Water Trail.
2. Establish baseline information to assess the opportunities and constraints to establishing and implementing a regional on-water recreation trail in San Francisco Bay for small, human-powered watercraft.
3. Through a collaborative, stakeholder process, explore and resolve to the maximum practicable extent the range of issues raised by the creation of a water trail, including but not limited to: compatibility with habitat protection, safety in commercial shipping lanes, continuity over several jurisdictions, concerns about camping in an urbanized area and funding for implementation.
4. Build public understanding of on-water recreation opportunities and constraints and increase public participation and local awareness by integrating boating groups and organizations as stakeholders and resource experts.
5. Develop recommendations that address site development, maintenance and stewardship issues, including recommendations for the retrofit of existing waterfront parks and marinas to integrate landing, launching and related support facilities.
6. Based on research, agency and stakeholder input, prepare final plan recommendations and implementation program options.
7. Supplement the information needed by the Commission to amend its *San Francisco Bay Plan* policies regarding Bay-oriented small craft recreation.

Milestones and Outcomes. The project is intended to be conducted in two phases over the two year period of the fellowship. During the first year (Phase 1), the Fellow, under general direction of the Commission's Senior Planner, would be expected to coordinate with all interested parties and to gather relevant information and establish a stakeholder process, while during the second year (Phase 2), the Fellow would draft the policy plan and implementation program, review policy proposals with stakeholders, and finalize policy and implementation recommendations for consideration by the Commission, Bay Access and its partners for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail. A potential work plan with activities and outcomes and target dates is included below and described in more detail under project description.

ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES	SCHEDULE
Phase 1	Aug. 2005 - July 2006
Become familiar with the Commission's structure, organization, and laws and policies pertaining to recreation in waterfront parks and marinas; begin working with mentor to develop work program and joint mentoring statement; collect background information on water trails (nationwide and statewide)	Aug. 2005 – Oct. 2005

Develop and convene a San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail planning committee and develop a draft policy and implementation issues framework for the committee's deliberations. Continue data gathering of background information.	Nov. 2005 - April 2006
Complete committee deliberation framework report for feedback from mentor.	May 2006
Circulate draft issue framework to planning committee and other interested parties for review and comment and revise the framework as appropriate; Update and revise Fellow work program as needed	June 2006 - July 2006

ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES	SCHEDULE
Phase 2	Aug. 2006 - July 2007
Working with planning committee, develop policy responses to issues addressed in policy and implementation framework; conduct site visits to proposed water trail sites	Aug. 2006-March 2007
Complete policy committee effort with presentation of proposed policy and implementation direction report.	April 2007
Prepare draft policy plan and implementation program that identifies sites for inclusion in water trail, policies for trail site improvement and maintenance, and an implementation program for review by select committee members; circulate draft recommendations to review experts, agency partners and to mentor for review and comment	April 2007 - June 2007
Complete policy recommendations and implementation program and provide final report to mentor, to the planning committee, the Commission, and to all interested parties	June - July 2007

Project Description

1. Phase 1

- a. **Become Familiar With Commission and Collect Background Information (3 months).**
During the first three months of the project (August 2005 through October 2005), the Fellow would be expected to become familiar with the Commission's structure and organization, to begin working with the mentor(s) to develop a detailed work program and joint mentoring statement, with the mentor(s), to develop a list of contacts and interested parties and possible sources for a literature review, and to conduct a literature review on recreational boating and water trails; conduct internet searches on national and international water trails; interview outside experts and interested parties for information on successful water trails and based on the results, to identify the major concerns, problems, and priorities related to establishing, promoting, implementing and maintaining a water trail.

- b. **Develop Stakeholder planning process, continue data gathering, and complete policy and implementation issue framework (9 months).** During the next nine months of Phase 1, the Fellow will be expected to develop a stakeholder process to guide the development of the water trail plan and implementation program. From November 2005 through January 2006, the Fellow would develop and convene a water trail planning committee comprised of members from key agencies, organizations and recreational boating groups, which may also serve as potential partners, and begin developing a policy issues framework for a water trail program, for example, criteria for identifying sites to be included and determining goals and objectives. From February 2006 through April 2006, the Fellow would continue developing the planning framework, which may include: applying criteria to potential water trail sites, and an inventory of site characteristics and needed improvements that can guide policy development, information from the San Francisco Bay Harbor Safety Committee on potential conflicts with commercial shipping, identifying sensitive habitat sites where landing and launching may be restricted or prohibited, and digitizing information on a water trail geographic information systems layer to support map production for the final report. Between May and July 2006, the Fellow should circulate the draft framework prior to a meeting of the planning committee and to other interested parties for review and comment and revise the issue framework accordingly.

2. Phase 2

- a. **Utilizing Stakeholder Process, develop draft policy plan and implementation program (8 months).** During Phase 2, the Fellow will be expected to conduct with mentor assistance, meetings of the planning committee to resolve the outstanding issues related to establishing a water trail, policies to guide improving sites for small craft use and funding opportunities for implementing the trail. During August 2006, the Fellow will work with the planning committee to complete criteria for selecting water trail sites at waterfront parks and marinas and will complete selection of the sites. Between September 2006 and March 2007, the Fellow, in consultation with the planning committee will develop a policy and implementation report. The report will summarize the opportunities and constraints for developing a water trail and will describe the direction proposed for policies and an implementation program
- b. **Final Policy Report and Implementation Program Recommendations (4 months).** During the months of April through June 2007, the Fellow will draft a final recommendation on the policy plan based on the policy and implementation report with the assistance of select members of the planning committee as expert reviewers. This effort will be based on the results of the deliberations of the planning committee and input from the mentor. During the months of June and July 2007, the Fellow will complete the recommendations and strategies and provide a final report to the mentor, to the planning committee, and to all interested parties. The Fellow will also present the major findings of the report to the Commission and to other interested parties.

Fellow Mentoring. The Fellow will work at the offices of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), a California state agency located in San Francisco, California. The Fellow will work under the direction of BCDC's designated mentor, Mr. Joseph LaClair, who is BCDC's Senior Planner specializing in recreation issues and designated to manage this program by the Commission. Mr. LaClair developed the Commission's recently

adopted targeted amendments to the *San Francisco Bay Plan* recreation policies. He is also overseeing the Commission's NOAA funded Section 309 grant to undertake a comprehensive review and update of the Bay Plan recreation policies. The Fellow will also work with other staff members in the Planning division.

Since the planning project involves a stakeholder process, the fellow will gather input from a wide variety of stakeholders and experts in Bay Area recreation. For example, the Fellow will interact directly with Bay Access members to ensure that the plan and implementation program meet its goals and objectives because Bay Access will have a pivotal role in the implementation of the water trail. The Fellow will also work with a number of Bay Area recreation organizations and agencies, such as the East Bay Regional Park District; the California Coastal Conservancy, and the National Park Service. Each of these agencies have been actively involved in assisting Bay Access develop its advocacy message and organizational efforts. The Fellow will also work with representatives of Bay Area boating organizations, such as the Pacific Inter-Club Yacht Association, and will gain valuable experience convening and managing a planning advisory committee. The Fellow will also gain valuable field experience through site visits to landing and launching sites and through meeting with groups that are concerned about the impacts of a water trail.

Project Partners. Because the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail would traverse several jurisdictions and land tenures, there is considerable interest from federal, state and local agencies, environmental organizations, and from recreational boating groups in participating in the formulation of the policies guiding the trail. Furthermore, there are some environmental concerns about increased human intrusion into sensitive habitat areas that must be addressed with a broad range of land management agencies and environmental organizations. Potential partners for this project include:

1. The California Coastal Conservancy, BCDC's sister agency in the California Coastal Management Program, which has been supporting the efforts of Bay Access to seek agency involvement in the creation and implementation of the Bay Area Water Trail, and is a critical player in developing a successful implementation program;
2. The Bay Trail Project, which has been at the table throughout the initial discussions about the potential for the water trail and has been considered as a potential parent institution to take over implementation of the water trail;
3. Bay Access, Inc., a non-profit corporation was formed in 2001 by a group of community activists and paddling enthusiasts to promote establishment of a San Francisco Bay Water Trail. To date, this group has led the advocacy effort for the Water Trail, engaging dozens of agencies and user groups, and leading educational and organizational workshops regarding the trail;
4. The National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which owns substantial shoreline areas surrounding the Golden Gate and Alcatraz Island;
5. The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, whose staff works with community groups and local and state governments to conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. RCTA has been working with Bay Access over the past two years to develop a prospectus for the trail and has guided strategic organizational planning efforts for Bay Access. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge over 40,000 acres of wetlands and managed ponds and California Department of Fish and Game who manages __ acres of

wildlife areas within the Bay with the potential for accommodating significant portions of the trail;

6. Save the San Francisco Bay Association, which has an active boater education program aimed at promoting environmentally sound boating practices in San Francisco Bay, and building support for Bay protection and restoration; California State Parks, East Bay Regional Park District, Marin County Parks and Open Space and other regional open space managers who manage shoreline lands that currently are improved with launching, landing and camping facilities catering to small craft; and
7. Recreational boating groups and marina operators, because of their experience, are the best equipped to participate in both the development and implementation of the plan. Many marinas include launching lanes, transient tie-up floats and other facilities that can provide launch/landing access to the general boating public.

Cost Share Description. The Commission's office is located in the heart of San Francisco's Financial District within two blocks of local and regional public mass transit system (bus, rail or ferry) stops or terminals making the commute to work relatively easy and cost effective. The Fellow will be a member of BCDC's staff and will be provided the normal work support and conditions of a BCDC staff member—an office, computer, computer software including Microsoft Office, Internet connection and e-mail address and service, normal office supplies, telephone, use of a BCDC staff automobile for local travel and site visits, participation in BCDC's public transit subsidy program, personnel assistance, and in-house and external training.

In addition to providing operating expenses and equipment costs, BCDC's planning staff's Senior Planner will directly supervise the Fellow, and the Commission's Chief Planner and Executive Director will provide direction and guidance.

Following is a breakdown of the shared costs. BCDC will provide \$15,000 in matching funds for the Fellows' salary over the two year duration and will provide the operating expenses and equipment and overhead costs in in-kind services. Overhead includes BCDC's supervisory and executive management contributions.

	NOAA	BCDC	Total
Salary	\$ 60,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 75,000
Operating Expenses and Equipment		\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
General Expenses		10,000	10,000
Printing		6,000	6,000
Communications		4,000	4,000
Postage		4,000	4,000
Travel (in-state)		2,000	2,000
Training		2,000	2,000
Facilities Operation		40,000	40,000
Contracts & Personal Services		4,000	4,000
Equipment		2,000	2,000
Computer & Furniture		22,000	22,000
Data Processing		4,000	4,000

Overhead		\$ 52,500	\$ 52,500
Total Cost	\$ 60,000	\$ 167,500	\$ 227,500